

C2 wherein the third clamp is movably mounted to the second positioning device in the second direction (Y) so that the third clamp can be moved to approach to the fourth clamp in the second direction thereby enabling the clamping of the workpiece even though a size of the workpiece in the second direction varies.

REMARKS

The Examiner has noted that the applicant's request for a continued prosecution application under 37 C.F.R. 1.53(d) is being treated as a request for continued examination under 37 C.F.R. 1.114. To the extent Applicants intended prosecution to continue and to the extent such prosecution can continue in accordance with the Examiner's treatment, the Applicants hereby acknowledge and approve of the Examiner's treatment of the present application as a continued examination application.

Claims 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention because in claim 14 "first claim" is not understood, it is unclear how the first clamp is moved to approach the second clamp in the second direction, and in claim 15 the term "the first clamp" lacks antecedent basis.

Claim 14 has been amended to change "first claim" to --first clamp-- which provides the antecedent basis for the term "the first clamp" in claim 15. This amendment is clearly to correct a typographical error and in no way is it a narrowing amendment. The version of the claims previously submitted with markings to show changes made makes that clear. In addition, referring to Fig. 5, the first clamp (53C, 53D) is moved

towards the second clamp (53A, 53B) in a second direction (Y) by way of driver motor 83 and ball screw 85. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejections be withdrawn.

Claims 10 and 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dunn. Claims 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Kindgren et al. in view of Dunn. Claims 10 and 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kindgren et al. in view of Dunn. Claims 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kindgren et al. and Dunn, and further in view of Graf et al.

The present invention is directed to a punching machine that includes a specific point where the sheet shaped material is transferred in the X-direction (first direction) and the working head is moved in the Y-direction (second direction), as shown in Fig. 5. It is impossible to transfer the sheet shaped material in the second direction because it is uncoiled from a coiled material which is very heavy.

Claim 10 has been amended to include the above feature by reciting "punching the workpiece along a direction which is parallel to the second direction" (claim 10, paragraph 4). Additionally, claim 10 has been amended to recite that "wherein the first positioning device and the second positioning device are constructed in a manner such that the first positioning device and the second positioning device may alternately transfer the workpiece in the first direction during punching operation, thereby punching the workpiece along another direction which is parallel to the first direction."

These features are not shown in the prior art. Dunn shows a workpiece mounted on a conveyor 78 that is transferred in a first direction (up and down in Fig. 4) and a

second direction (right and left in Fig. 4). Therefore, the workpiece 78 is transferred in both the first and second directions, and the coiled material of the present invention could not be used in conjunction with the punching machine of Dunn.

Graft et al. discloses a turret punch press with a coiler to punch a coiled material. The punch press has one positioning device which has a plurality of clamps. Therefore, the Graft et al. punch press does not have a first and second positioning device that alternately transfers a workpiece in a first direction, as recited by the claim.

Kindgren et al. discloses a punch press having a clamp 27 and 28. The distance between the clamps 27 and 28 are adjusted and simultaneously clamp and transfer the workpiece 16a during the punching operation. The Kindgren et al. reference does not show a first and second positioning device that may alternately transfer a workpiece in a first direction during a punching operation, as recited by the claim.

By the foregoing amendments, Applicants assert that they have placed claims 10 and 12-16 in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the prior art rejections are respectfully requested.

As all grounds of rejection have been addressed, entry of this Amendment and issuance of a Notice of Allowance of claims 10 and 12-16 are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any shortage or credit any overpayment of fees to BLANK ROME COMISKY & McCAULEY, LLP, Deposit Account No. 23-2185(000004.00661). In the event that a petition for an extension of time is required to be submitted herewith and in

the event that a separate petition does not accompany this response, Applicants hereby petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.36(a) for an extension of time for as many months as are required to render this submission timely. Any fee due is authorized above.

Respectfully submitted,

Morikatsu MATSUDA et al.

By: Michael D. White

Michael D. White
Registration No. 32,795
Attorney for Applicant

BLANK ROME COMISKY & MCCAULEY, LLP
The Farragut Building, Suite 1000
900 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 530-7400
Facsimile: (202) 463-6915

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Claims 10 and 12-16 have been amended as follows:

10. (Amended) A punching machine, comprising:

a body frame having a table (33, 35), the table supporting a workpiece (W) to be worked;

a first positioning device (53) mounted on the table, the first positioning device positioning the workpiece in a first direction (X);

a second positioning device (69) mounted on the table, the second positioning device positioning the workpiece in the first direction; and

a working head (8, 9, 11) mounted in the body frame so as to be positioned in a second direction (Y) perpendicular to the first direction to punch the workpiece, thereby punching the workpiece along a direction which is parallel to the second direction,

wherein the first positioning device (53) and the second positioning device (69) are arranged in series in the first direction (X), thereby the workpiece (W) is [positioned] transferred only in the first direction by one of the first positioning device and the second positioning device; and the workpiece is not [positioned] transferred in the second direction (Y); and

wherein the first positioning device (53) and the second positioning device (69) are constructed in a manner such that the first positioning device and the second positioning device may alternately [position] transfer the workpiece (W) in the first direction (X) during punching operation, thereby punching the workpiece along another direction which is parallel to the first direction.

12. (Amended) A punching machine according to Claim [10] 13, wherein the workpiece (W) is sheet shaped material uncoiled from a coiled material.

13. (Amended) A punching machine according to Claim [12] 10, wherein the first positioning device (53) is located at one side of the working head (8, 9, 11) on the table (33, 35); and

wherein the second positioning device is located at the other side of the working head on the table so that the working head is located between the first positioning device (53) and the second positioning device (69) so as to be sandwiched by the first positioning device and the second positioning device.

14. (Amended) A punching machine according to Claim 10, wherein the first positioning device (53) includes a first [claim] clamp (53C, 53D) to clamp a first margin of the workpiece (W) in the first direction [and a second clamp to clamp a second margin opposite to the first margin of the workpiece; and];

wherein the first positioning device (53) further includes a second clamp (53A, 53B) to clamp a second margin opposite to the first margin of the workpiece wherein the second clamp is fixedly mounted to the first positioning device; and

wherein the first clamp is movably mounted to the first positioning device in the second direction (Y) so that the first clamp can be moved to approach the second clamp in the second direction thereby enabling the clamping of the workpiece even though a size of the workpiece in the second direction varies.

15. (Amended) A punching machine according to Claim [14] 16, wherein the first clamp (53C, 53D) is comprised of a plurality of clamps; and

the second clamp (53A, 53B) is comprised of a plurality of clamps.

16. (Amended) A punching machine according to Claim [15] 14, wherein the second positioning device (69) includes a third clamp (69C, 69D) to clamp the first margin of the workpiece (W) in the first direction [and a fourth clamp to clamp the second margin opposite to the first margin of the workpiece; and];

wherein the second positioning device (69) further includes a fourth clamp (69A, 69B) to clamp the second margin opposite to the first margin of the workpiece wherein the fourth clamp is fixedly mounted to the second positioning device; and
wherein the third clamp is movably mounted to the second positioning device in the second direction (Y) so that the third clamp can be moved to approach to the fourth clamp in the second direction thereby enabling the clamping of the workpiece even though a size of the workpiece in the second direction varies.